



State Senator Velmanette Montgomery

Chair, Children & Families

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For Immediate Release

Montgomery/Wright Foster Care Re-Entry Bill Signed into Law

Yesterday the Governor signed Senator Montgomery and Assemblymember Wright's Foster Care Re-Entry bill (S8834/A10581-B) into law. This law makes it easier for young people who aged out of foster care to return to placement if they need for the duration of the COVID-19 state of emergency.

"COVID-19 has had a multiplier effect on the struggles faced by our most vulnerable populations. Young people aging out of foster care already face immense hurdles as they try to secure stable housing, employment and healthcare. We cannot throw them out to fend for themselves in the middle of an unprecedented pandemic," **said State Senator Velmanette Montgomery.** "This law will bring them a level of stability so they can focus on staying healthy while we get through this pandemic. I am glad we were able to get this done and I thank my colleagues and the many advocates involved for moving on this issue."

"The Foster Care Re-Entry bill provides a necessary safety net for youth that may need ongoing support during this pandemic. Allowing foster care youth to return to care during a pandemic without a court motion is a smart, efficient and protective measure, **said Assemblymember Tremaine Wright.** "I am proud of New York for clearly supporting our foster care youth and I thank the Governor, Senator Montgomery, our child welfare advocates and other partners who worked diligently to make this a reality. Our efforts improved the health and safety of our community."

Normally young adults are able return to foster care with approval from Family Court if they have no alternatives *and* agree to participate in a vocational or educational program. Because access to court has been severely restricted during the pandemic, this law will allow local social service districts to automatically grant these requests for assistance by youth between ages 18 and 21. It also waives the requirement for participation in vocational and educational programs to eliminate barriers to returning to care.